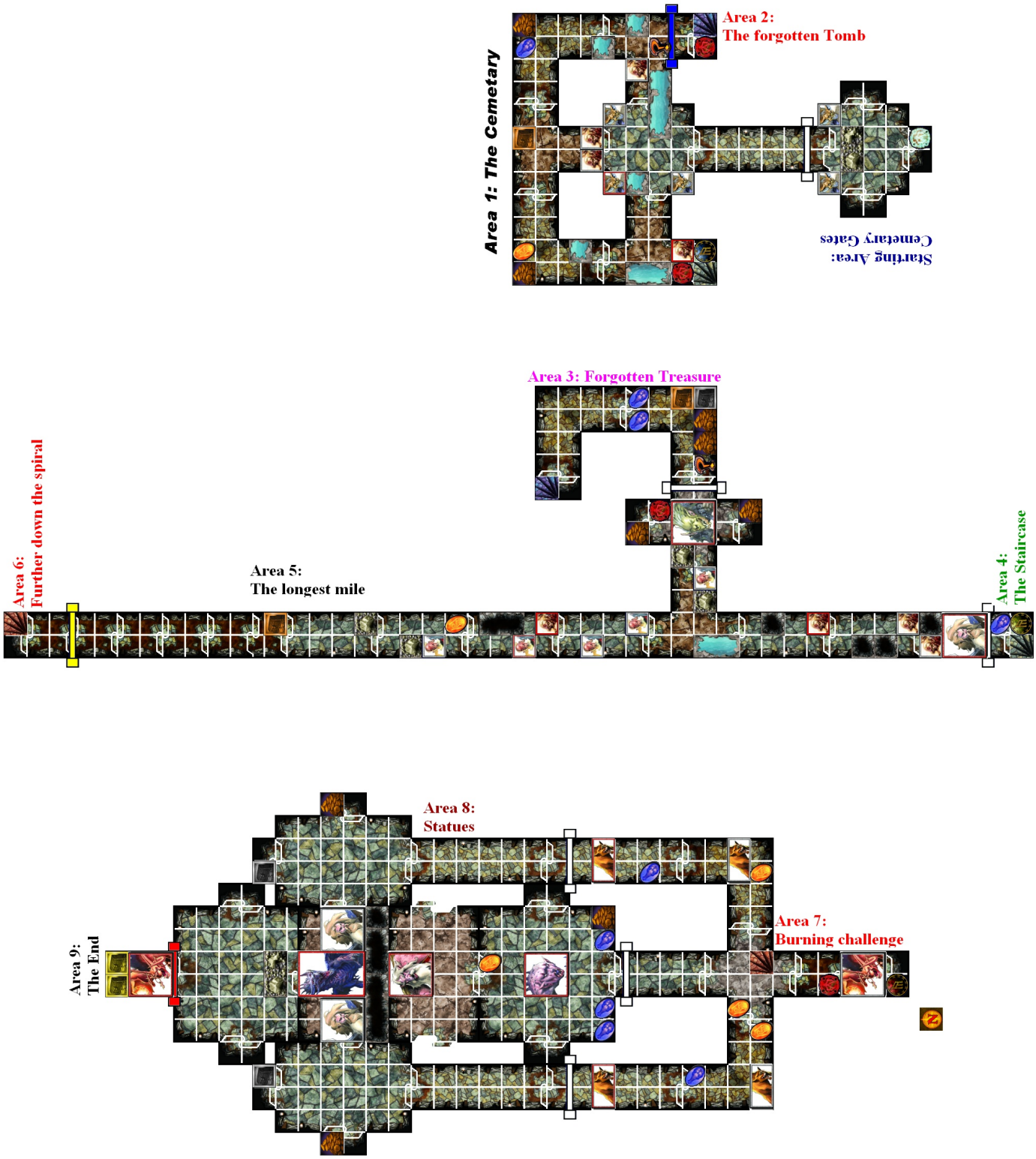

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Friends beyond the grave

By Stephan Reitz

Important: For you as the overlord it´s important to know, that the quest can be very easy or very challenging to the heroes. If they take the blue rune door, they don´t have to battle with a lot of creatures in area 5 and they will have a better equipment, when facing the forthcoming challenges.
Furthermore, if the heroes don´t take any of the treasures in Area 8, they simply will have to battle the evil archdemon Boseossus without the aid of his minions, but if anyone touches the treasure all hell will break loose on the poor band of heroes, so you see, there are different routes the quest can take - it all depends on the choices your adversaries make....

Quest Background

It has been quite a while since your last great adventure and since that day you have been sitting around in these damn tavern called "The Rusty Nail" and the days are just passing by - damn you´re so bored of all this adventuring stuff. While you´re drinking the same old watered ale day by day your mood ist getting darker and darker - and you find yourself dreaming of the old days when you were young and full of good intentions ...
But now - look at youself, rusty swords an armor, grey hair and a few minor disadvantages like that paralyzed leg and the deaf feeling in your right arm, not to mention that pot belly of yours ...

No more hard feeling you thought, when suddenly the door swings open and the rays of the good old sun break through the smoke in the tavern and the mist in your head. An old friend of yours, Maurice Pollard the Night Elf Rogue enters the pub and stalks to your table. He gets hisself a chair an speaks to you with a worried look: " My trusted friends, I´m looking into the future with great concern, cause frightening things are going on at the old cemetary just outside of town. You remember Lenny MacDirkson, the grunting warrior, Bjorn the Barbarian and Carlos the Whiskey Barrel ? Old friends and adventuring comrades of yours, weren´t they? Died long ago I know, but believe it or not, yesterday night, while I was let´s say searching for things at the local graveyard, cause you now, Baron Le Maass was buried a few days ago with all of his jewelry, I saw the dead walking - and one of them looked exactly like Lenny, of course, a little more rotten ...
I´m in fear of the fact, that all of your old friends are coming back from the dead, and that can´t be good, or what do you mean ... ?"

Without another word you grab your weaponry, toss a few coins to the barkeeper for the ale an stumble into the sunset, off to the local graveyard.

Quest Goals

After journeying to the cemetary you prepare to walk through the rusty old cemetary gate to find out if the Night Elves words are truth and if the memory of your friends has been defiled. Your goal is to find out who is responsible for the strange things that are going on at the cemetary and to kill the creator responsible for this.You know of an old tomb under the cemetary and that there are a few transport glyphs under the earth that can be activated. You start with 5 conquest tokens. If you ever run out of conquest tokens, the dark forces have one and your bodies will be difiled with the curse of the undead.

Starting Area

Twenty minutes later you arrive in front of the old cemetary gate, which swings squeaking in the strong breeze that announces the coming of a heavy thunderstorm. Scattered raindrops start falling on your heads an you decide to enter the cemetary at once. A sudden flash of lightning lets you blink with your eyes and for a moment it looks like the old stone gargoyles in front of the gate are moving ... But what´s that, they´re heading right for you, a fierce look in their unnatural glowing eyes .....

Pay attention to the fact, that the two Razorwings in front of the cemetary are actually gargoyles - creatures of animated stone, filled with a strange unlive. Their statistics are the same as that of a razorwing except the fact, that their armor value is 4.

Area 1

After crushing the gatekeepers you enter the cemetary, just to find out that the Night Elf was right about the walking dead. Under the light of the lightning strikes that rip the nightly sky, you can see walking skeletons, armed with old bows and arrows, and one of the skeletons wears exactly the same armor with witch you buried your old friend Lenny MacDirkson a few years ago. But the walking dead are not the only problem you´ll have to face, cause another pack of gargoyles rises from their stony resting places and the strong rainfall has allready softened up the earth of the old burial sites, so that a lot of muddy water pools are hindering your movement.
Through the darkness you´re able to see a dark passage leading downstairs in the western part of the cemetary and the good preserved crypt of the Paladin "Volkmar the Divider" in the eastern edge of the burial ground.

Be aware that the Razorwings in this area are also gargoyles and use the same statistics as the gargoyles in the starting are, except the Master Razorwing, which is actually an obsidian gargoyle witch uses the statistics of a Master Razorwing with an Armor value of 6. The Master Skeleton represent the undead remains of Lenny MacDirkson an old friend of the heroes who has been animated with new live by the dark master of the cemetary. He uses the same statistics as a Master Skeleton except the fact, that he has an armor value of 3 and 7 hit points. If the heroes put Lenny to his final rest, they should be rewarded with 2 Conquest tokens.
To open the crypt in the eastern part of the cemetary, the heroes have

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to activate the rune in the western part, but don´t push them to do so - if they take the direct passage downstairs without paying their respect to Volkmars last resting place, they will regret that fact sooner or later ....

If a heroe steps on the encounter marker:

A little bit tired from the battle you sway towars the crypt of "Volkmar the Divider", which seems to be in a very good condition - you feel no evil around here, the only strange thing is the silver glow which emitts through the slits around the heavy stone door.

Area 2

After you opened the stone portal a thick cloud of dust surrounds you for a few moments - the whole crypt floor is dust - covered and you come to the conclusion, that no human soul has entered this place for a long long time. Nevertheless you strive forward, heading towards the staircase thats leading down into the darkness which is only suppressed by the strange silvery glow from down below.

Area 3

After you walked down the staircase for nearly an eternity, you enter a large crypt, which is emitting the silvery glow which blinded you the whole way down. Down here the glow ist so bright that you have to avert your eyes for quite a while, before you´re able to scrutinize your surroundings. You are standing in the last resting place of "Volkmar the Divider" the holy Propraetor and leader of the "Holy Order of the endless sleep", a religion who´s cornerstones are rooted in the fight against the undead menace which threatens the world of the living. The whole chamber is filled with burial objects and riches beyond your imagination and round the corner you get a glimpse of the sarcophagus of Volkmar - cut out of one white marble stone block.

If one of the heroes steps on the encounter marker read this:

Standing before the sarcophagus, you´re brooding over opening Volkmars last resting place or not, when suddenly the heavy slab on the sarcophagus begins to move all by herself. After it smashes to the ground with a loud rumble, you take a kook inside and at first can´t believe you eyes; inside´s not he corpse you expected, but a slivery glowing paladin armor - the legendary Rune Plate, which now belongs to you. In your head echo the words of Volkmar the Divider: " Use it wisely my friend and don´t be selfish about this relic - take it to the greatest possible effect ....."

Important: The overlord player should now hand over the Rune Plate card to the hero that activated the encounter marker. The stone door in the western corner can only be opened an closed from this side, so it´s at first only possible for the heroes to enter the room through Area 2. Later the room can be crossed from both sides. If the heroes should try to open the door from the other side, tell them that there´s no possibility at hand to open the heavy stone portal.

Area 4

After following the passageway underground you end your journey before an old wooden door, or do you really want to open it ? Slimy funghi are growing on the doorknop and spider webs are filling the air all around you - soon you start coughing, perhaps it would be a good idea to make up your mind and take a trip back to "The Rusty Nail", cause you are´nt so young anymore, are you?

Area 5

After opening the disgusting door, you look down a long dimmly lighted corridor carved out of the damp earth. Right before you, you see the towering figure of a Manticore and in the distance you can make out a few skeletons and sorcerers.

Be prepared for a long battle and try to hinder the movement of the heroes as long as you can - they should really get tired fighting their way down the path to their final enemy - of course if you have enough time. Otherwise try not spawn to many monsters at the far end of the corridor and save your threat tokens for the final battle.
Furthermore remember that the heroes can´t open the door to Area 3 from this side an if they haven´t entered the crypta yet, they would have a very hard time battling the monsters in the corridor. If you really want to give the heroes a challenge try to make best use of the pits and the rubble spots an spawn as many ranged combat monsters as you can - this can really slow the heroes down an perhaps they will run out of conquest tokens ...

Area 6

After opening the yellow runed door it seems like you are looking right into the mouth of hell iself. A bottomless pit lies right before you and your torches are´nt able to illuminate the ground. Seems like your quest is over, but wait a second, aren´t there steps carved out of the rough stone, leading down into the darkness ...

It takes 10 movement points to use this staircase, so most heroes should need a round or two, walking down there, or climbing up the steps for any reason.

Area 7

After you followed the long winded starcase for quite a while, you find youself in the entrance hall of a long abandoned temple of a long forgotten deity of death. The solid walls were built out of skulls and bones from all kind of creatures and the whole scenery is illuminated by the light of magical torches which are spreading a weak redish light throughout the hall. Before you, you can see the shadows of

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four giant hounds - prowling at you with anger and then you hear a voice which sents you shivers down you spine from behind: " Fools, how dare you try to disturb the slumber of my master - you won´t have time to regret your actions, cause i will make your corpses bow down before the might of Boseossus. Ashes to ashes, so let´s burn them boys and make them pay for their ignorance." Before the last words died away, the hell hounds are charging at you.

The red rune in the southern part of the entrance hall unlocks but doesn´t open the red runed door which leads to Area 9. If there are more then 3 heroes in the adventure group, on of them has to stand on the rune, while another one opens the door to Boseossus simultaneosly, so that the group has to split up for a few rounds. Otherwise it´s enough if someone stepped on the rune before they try to open the red runed door, cause the fight against Boseossus would be to hard if you split up a group of three or less heroes.

Area 8

You are standing in a great hall divided into too parts by a great chasm from which you can here the moaning of tortures souls, or are this just the winds blowing from down below? The whole place looks like a place of whorship, but the followers of the deity which once founded these temple are as long forgotten, as the deity they they devoted their live to. Nevertheless the great hall is in a good condition and dominated by the statues of a great wyrm, a mighty giant an a few other creatures. Furthermore you can see an altar and a huge golden portal at the far site of the hall. As you step forward a strange noise fills the air, like religious chanting coming directly from the walls.

If the heroes grab anything of the treasures, gold piles or the potions which are scattered throughout the hall read the following:

After you buried the booty in your pockets, the religious chanting increases and a strange voice echoes throughout the hall: " How dare you loot my sacred temple in my absence, unfaithfull scum. But you will pay for the desecretion of this holy place - with your lives and your eternal souls." A few moments later the statues begin to move.

So the heroes couldn´t hold back, could they ? Now they have to deal with the guardians of the temple, which have the normal statistics, except the fact, that the master dragon, master giant an the master naga all have an armor value of 7, and the manticores have one of 4. If you really want to give the heroes a though fight, use the altar which is blocking line of sight to full effect for spawning more monsters.

Area 9

After you opened the huge golden portal, you have to hold your breath, cause the nauseating smell of decay slaps into your faces. you tumble back a few steps and at first don´t believe your eyes, because right before you towers Boseossus the Demon Avatar of the Undead, Prince of Darkness and sheppered of all lost souls.
You expect him to tell you why he´s here, or why he damned your friends like poor Lenny to their undead existence, but he simply wades forward an tries to finish you of in direct combat.

Boseossus uses the same statistics as a Master Demon, except the fact, that he has an armor value of 7 and 8 extra wounds. Every three rounds after the first combat round a master skeleton spawns in a space directly adjactent to him, even in the direct line of sight of the heroes. If no such space is free, the spawning is delayed for up to that moment, when a space gets free. When the fist skeleton spawns, read the following text:

As if Boseossus alone wasn´t enough, suddenly a glowing portal opens next to him, and a fully armed skeleton steps through it, before it closes again. The look of the armor reminds you of Bjorn the Barbarian, or was it Carlos ? Just to think of it makes you angry an so you fly into a battle frenzy, even Boseossus has never seen before.

After entering the battle frenzy, each hero does two extra damage an gets two extra free surges for the rest of the combat.

After the heroes defeated Boseossus read the following text aloud:

With the death of the demon also died your rage and after you calmed down you begin to look around, spotting the golden chests only a few seconds later. You avenged your long lost friends and with the gold from those chest you can drink hell a lot ale in the "Rusty Nail". With such thoughts you begin to loot the treasures lying around, looking forward to a new day and a hangover like you have never had one before.

For defeating Boseossus, the heroes gain 4 conquest tokens. They have finished their quest.

Chests:

Copper 1 2 Conquest Tokens, 1 Curse, 1 Copper Treasure
Copper 2 1 Conquest Token, 100 coins, 1 Copper Treasure
Copper 3 2 Curses, 2 Copper Treasures

Silver 1 3 Conquest Tokens, 1 Curse, 1 Silver Treasure
Silver 2 2 Conquest Tokens, 200 coins, 1 Silver Treasure
Silver 3 1 Conquest Token, 2 Curses, 2 Silver Treasures

Gold 1 3 Conquest Tokens, 1 Curse, 400 coins
Gold 2 2 Curses, 2 Gold Treasures

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